

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Parents, Principals, Superintendents, State's Attorneys  
FROM: Armando Vilaseca, Commissioner  
SUBJECT: Clarifying the Process for Enrollment in Vermont Home Study  
DATE: July 23, 2012

---

Home study is expressly referenced in the compulsory attendance statute, 16 V.S.A. § 1121, as one of the several enrollment options by which parents can fulfill their legal obligation to ensure that their children between the ages of 6 and 16 years of age receive an adequate education. Parents desiring to exercise the option to provide a home-based, parent-directed education for their children must first submit a home study enrollment notice for each student that meets the requirements set forth in the home study statute, 16 V.S.A. § 166b.

Enrollment in a Vermont home study program is intended to be for a complete school year. I do not interpret the home study statute in a manner that allows parents to ignore Vermont's compulsory attendance requirements. This is consistent with the fundamental principle that statutes dealing with the same subject matter should be construed with reference to each other. Therefore, I wish to clarify the circumstances under which the Department will and will not accept enrollment notices for processing.

The Department will accept enrollment notices for the following school year at any time between March 1 and Labor Day. Parents intending to enroll a child in a Vermont home study program for the coming school year (2012-2013) should ensure that the Department receives an enrollment notice for the child by Labor Day. Enrollment notices received via mail will be considered timely if postmarked before Labor Day. Enrollment notices received via electronic mail, facsimile, or in-person delivery to the Department, will be considered timely if delivered by 4:30 pm EDT on the first business day following Labor Day (Tuesday September 4, 2012).

After Labor Day and until March 1, the Department will accept enrollment notices for the school year in progress only for a student who: moves into Vermont from out of state during the school year; or turns six years of age during the school year; or seeks to transfer into home study from enrollment in a Vermont public school, an approved or recognized independent school, or an approved education program.

The Department will no longer accept enrollment notices after March 1 for the school year in progress. After March 1, enrollment notices will be accepted for the following school year. This will ensure that there is sufficient time to process enrollment notices consistent with the home study statute, and also avoid any confusion concerning the school year for which enrollment is being sought.

Please note that enrollment notices are prospective, and enrollment in home study does not occur immediately upon the submission of an enrollment notice. The Department is directed by law to send an acknowledgment letter to the home study program within 14 business days following the Department's receipt of an enrollment notice. For most families, a child's enrollment in home study becomes effective no sooner than upon receipt of such an acknowledgement letter from the Department. Enrollment can be delayed, however, if an enrollment notice is lacking information required under the home study statute, or if there are other issues concerning the proposed home study program. It is important to keep this in mind if you are removing your child from school once the school year is in progress, as children who fail to attend school while a home study notice of enrollment is pending may be deemed to be legally truant.

Please address all questions or concerns to the Vermont Department of Education Home Study team:

Karen Agnew  
Home Study Consultant  
(802) 828-3138  
[karen.agnew@state.vt.us](mailto:karen.agnew@state.vt.us)

Brynne Reed  
Education Consultant  
(802) 828-5113  
[brynne.reed@state.vt.us](mailto:brynne.reed@state.vt.us)

Pat Donahue  
Home Study Program Technician  
802-828-3352  
[pat.donahue@state.vt.us](mailto:pat.donahue@state.vt.us)

